



For Immediate Release

July 12, 2013

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers Partners with Forest Service to Improve Habitat on Pole Mountain

Sportsmen conservation organization to help address illegal motorized use

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LARIMIE, WY – The Wyoming Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers has partnered with the Medicine Bow National Forest to restore habitat degraded by illegal Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use on Pole Mountain.

On Saturday, July 27, members of WY Backcountry Hunters & Anglers will gather to curb resource damage by installing buck and rail fencing, signage and barricades along motorized routes. Pole Mountain has long been recognized for its high quality habitat for elk, mule deer and numerous other non-game species. Recently however, unauthorized OHV use has had a significant impact on the area's habitat, specifically in riparian areas and meadows.

"We've seen increasing impacts on multiple parts of the Pole Mountain units as a result of unauthorized motorized use," stated Aaron Swallow, Rangeland Management Specialist for the Laramie Ranger District. "The impacted areas include big game riparian and upland habitat, so it's good to see there are sportsmen out there who recognize this growing problem. We welcome the fact that they are willing to work with us and our partners to address this important issue."

In part to maintain healthy fish and wildlife habitat, the Medicine Bow National Forest's Travel Management Plan limits motorized use to designated routes, yet compliance with the plan remains an issue. As Wyoming Backcountry Hunters & Anglers Co-Chair Scott Reekers put it, "Whether it's a hunt ruined, water quality affected or habitat degraded, sportsmen simply cannot stand by and let such lawless activity go unchecked. We're committed to addressing this growing problem."

To compliment on-the-ground efforts, Wyoming Backcountry Hunters & Anglers offers a Rewards Program of up to \$500 for information leading to the conviction of illegal OHV users. "We understand our public land managers have limited resources to enforce

motorized regulations. The OHV Reward Program is designed to encourage public land users to self-police and report habitat abuse when they see it” said Tim Brass, Southern Rockies Coordinator for Backcountry Hunters & Anglers.

Both the U.S. Forest Service and WY Backcountry Hunters & Anglers encourage members of the public to proactively assist law enforcement when they can, all be it in a non-confrontational way.

“We see this as the beginning of a healthy partnership with an organization that recognizes the importance of responsible multiple-use on Forest Service administered lands.” summarized Swallow.

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Volunteers will meet at the Lincoln Rest Area on I-80 at 9:00 AM on July 27th. The public is encouraged to join. A wild game lunch will be provided by Wyoming Backcountry Hunters & Anglers. For more information on this event, please contact Tim Brass (651-206-4669) or Aaron Swallow (307-745-2340).

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers seeks to ensure America's outdoor heritage of hunting and fishing in a natural setting, through education and work on behalf of wild public lands and waters.

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